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THE ORIGIN OF SOME SOCIAL CUSTOMS.

A CONSIDERABLE portion of our lives is regulated by certain rules of behaviour, which at first sight appear to be merely arbitrary conventions consciously chosen as symbols of respect and goodwill. Mr Spencer, in his book on *Ceremonial Institutions*, shows that these formal observances—ceremonies of state, religion, and social life—are not thus deliberately chosen, but have their origin in spontaneous manifestations of emotion, from which they gradually evolve, as a natural product of social life. The manners and customs of mankind in all parts of the world, concerning which Mr Spencer gives a vast amount of interesting information, illustrate the various phases through which many of the 'conventions' of modern life have passed in this process of evolution.

A good example of the gradual evolution of an apparently arbitrary convention, is afforded by Mr Spencer's explanation of the simplest form of salute—the familiar nod. An Englishman passing a friend in the street greets him with a slight nod. Why? Because it is the custom. But why has custom adopted this particular form of salute? Let us follow Mr Spencer as he traces it from its origin. A dog afraid of being beaten, crouches before his master. A small dog alarmed at the approach of a big one, sometimes throws itself down, and rolls over on its back. Both these actions are signs of submission—spontaneous expressions of a desire to conciliate the more powerful. That this is their true interpretation, there can be little doubt, on comparing them with the parallel behaviour of some uncivilised tribes. In an African tribe visited by Livingstone, by way of salute 'they throw themselves on their backs on the ground, and rolling from side to side, slap the outside of their thighs, as expressions of thankfulness and welcome.' Here we have the spontaneous expression of two elements of propitiatory behaviour—submission to a superior, and joy at his presence. In other tribes, this complete form of obeisance is abridged, and various modifications of it are found. Prostration on

the face is common. A slight further abridgment of this gives us the attitude of kneeling while the head rests on the ground. 'In past ages, when the Emperor of Russia was crowned, the nobility did homage by bending down their heads, and knocking them at his feet to the very ground.' A further modification is produced by the desire to do homage while approaching a superior. In Dahomey, they 'crawl like snakes, or shuffle forward on their knees.' This brings us to the attitude of going on all-fours; and a still further modification gives the attitude of kneeling. Slightly less abject is kneeling on one knee; and the next step is merely bending the knee. The Japanese 'salute a superior by kneeling; but in the street, merely make a motion as if they were going to kneel.' This action survives among ourselves as the courtesy. Next, omitting the bend of the knee, all that remains is the bend of the body which accompanied the more complete salutes: hence we get the bow, indicating respect; and this passes by insensible transitions from the humble salaam of the Hindu to the familiar nod of an intimate friend. The transition is so gradual, and the intermediate phases so abundantly exemplified, that it is impossible to doubt that such is the true derivation of this trivial act of modern etiquette.

Similar in origin is the raising of the hat as a respectful salute. In primitive states, the conquered man surrenders himself, his weapons, and whatever of his clothing is worth having; hence, stripping becomes a mark of submission. Cook, for instance, relates of some Tahitians, 'they took off a great part of their clothes, and put them on us.' In another tribe, this ceremony is abridged to the presentation of the girdle only. In Abyssinia, inferiors strip to the girdle before superiors. A further abridgment is found among the natives of the Gold Coast, who salute Europeans by slightly removing their robe from the left shoulder; but even there, special respect is shown by completely uncovering the shoulder. In other tribes, they also doff the cap. Hence, it seems that 'the removal of the hat among European

peoples, often reduced among ourselves to touching the hat, is a remnant of that process of unclothing himself, by which in early times the captive expressed the yielding up of all he had.

Not less interesting is Mr Spencer's explanation of the origin of shaking hands. From kissing as a natural sign of affection, to kissing the hand as a compliment, the transition is easy, and requires no further explanation; for a simulation of affection, no less than submission, is an essential part of propitiatory ceremony. 'If, of two persons, each wishes to make an obeisance to the other by kissing his hand, and each, out of compliment, refuses to have his own hand kissed, what will happen? Just as, when leaving a room, each of two persons, proposing to give the other precedence, will refuse to go first, and there will result at the doorway some conflict of movements, preventing either from advancing; so, if each of two tries to kiss the other's hand, and refuses to have his own kissed, there will result a raising of the hand of each by the other towards his own lips; and by the other, a drawing of it down again; and so on alternately. Clearly, the difference between the simple squeeze, to which this salute is now often abridged, and the old-fashioned hearty shake, exceeds the difference between the hearty shake and the movement that would result from the effort of each to kiss the hand of the other.'

Kissing, we have said, is a natural expression of affection; and it is curious to note the analogous manifestations among animals and some of the lower tribes of men. A dog displays his affection for his master by licking his hand. A ewe distinguishes her lamb by the olfactory sense, and apparently derives pleasure from its exercise. The same sense is used among men not only to distinguish, as in the case of Jacob and Isaac, but also as a mark of affection. Among the Mongols, for instance, it is found as 'a mark of paternal affection, instead of embracing;' while the Burmese 'do not kiss each other in the Western fashion, but apply the lip and nose to the cheek, and make a strong inhalation.'

Among ceremonies connected with marriage, the following deserve notice: 'In China, during a wedding visit, each visitor prostrated himself at the feet of the bride, and knocked his head on the ground, saying: "I congratulate you—I congratulate you!" whilst the bride, also on her knees, and knocking her head upon the ground, replied: "I thank you—I thank you!"'

The following ceremony is scarcely what we usually associate with ceremonious treatment, though in certain fishing villages in Scotland a somewhat similar practice is still observed: 'At Arab marriages there is much feasting, and the unfortunate bridegroom undergoes the ordeal of whipping by the relations of his bride.' This is usually explained as a test of courage; but Mr Spencer looks upon it as a survival from more barbarous times, when brides were frequently carried off by force; and the rough treatment which the bridegroom receives is a lingering modification of the resistance of the bride's friends. This explanation suggests a question about one of our own well-known customs, namely, that of pelting the bridegroom with shoes and rice. Are these harmless missiles representatives of the

weapons used to repel the invading bridegroom in earlier times?

The inconsistency between the Chinese custom of wearing white clothing as mourning and the customary black of European nations, seems at first sight to indicate a clear case of an arbitrary convention; but it is fully accounted for on the evolution principle. A mourning dress would naturally be of coarse texture, and, among pastoral peoples, hair would be the most available material for the purpose; the hair used being commonly dingy, darkness of colour became the conspicuous feature of mourning. In a crowded agricultural population, on the other hand, where animals available for the purpose are comparatively rare, and hair consequently costly, cotton was the material that naturally established itself as the mourning colour.

Mr Spencer's book abounds in interesting information about the ceremonies of people in all parts of the world; but the foregoing examples will suffice to illustrate the method by which many of the so-called 'conventions' of civilised life are shown to be 'natural products of social life.' In these days, there is a tendency to disregard ceremonial observances; but it is well to remember that, as a check to 'rudeness of behaviour, and consequent discord,' ceremonial restraints exercise a control which cannot well be spared, until 'mutual forbearance and kindness in society,' which form the true principle of social behaviour, are sufficiently extended to supersede them.

THE FORTUNES OF BERTRAM OAKLEY.

CHAPTER XLVIII.—THE CONFESSION.

'Now, Mr Oakley, and you, Squire, or Right Worshipful, or whatever it is—I've lived so long under a foreign sky, and got into scrapes in so many places—I may own to it now—What am I prating about?—No; I'm not light-headed!' added Nat Lee sharply, as if he divined the thoughts of those who stood by his bedside. 'Mind's as clear as a bell; the doctor can tell you that.'

'It is true; he is not delirious,' whispered the house-surgeon, who had been invited to be present at the taking of the dying man's deposition.

Bertram had been fortunate enough to find a magistrate, a friend of Mr Mervyn's, and to whom he was himself personally known, at home; and this gentleman, hearing that the case was urgent, had willingly accompanied him to the Accident Ward of St Bartholomew's. Writing materials were ready; and nothing but the increasing weakness of the patient, and his propensity to ramble in his talk, retarded the business of the hour.

'When I was a youngster at Dulchester, my native place, and where you'll see in the churchyard headstones with the name of Lee, thickish yet,' said the adventurer huskily, 'I was a clerk in the Old Bank. The banker was Mr Denham, a rich man, with two sons. One of them, the doctor, I scarcely knew when I met him in the High Street. The other was Walter Denham; and perhaps, if I had known no more of him than I did of his honest elder brother, I might not have been lying here to-day, the victim of a gambling brawl, for a dog's death, and a pauper's burial. But that's neither here nor there. To my sorrow, I did know Mr Walter, who was older than myself,

and a dandy—a swell, as they say now—and better supplied with pocket-money. He was a young man of fashion, we thought; and I, an ambitious lad, who courted pleasure. He it was who egged me on to bet my money on races, to play cards, to ruin myself, in the hope of winning; and when I found myself with empty pockets, he lent me small sums on my IOU, which he was always careful to keep me in remembrance of—very careful!

'I did not understand at the time that Mr Walter Denham wished to get me, by his encouragement of my extravagance and by his loans, entirely into his power, seeing in me, no doubt, a tool that would be useful for the work he had in hand. Another instrument he secured too. This was a former school-fellow and fellow-clerk of mine, Henry Crawley—Judas was his nickname in the playground—a sly, sneaking fellow, that would have robbed his father; he did rob his old grandmother, who brought him up, him and his sisters—and boasted of it! Yes; I was bad enough; but Crawley was of a blacker feather than even myself. I was no thief then, only a scamp. mind you; but Crawley was more advanced; and that was how Mr Walter had a hold upon him. He had altered the figures of a cheque, and Mr Walter had found it out—by accident, I believe—and held the knowledge of it over him like a rod in pickle. One word to the old banker, who was a stern man, and it would have been cropped hair and gyves and the convict-ship for Crawley.

'Well, to cut a long story short, this is what Mr Walter wanted. He wanted to supplant his brother the doctor—whom the old man, our master, had always declared to be his future heir—and to get the property for himself. His brother, the story went, had been kind to him—saved him from drowning once—got him reconciled to his father more than once. But Gold was the god Walter Denham worshipped; and when his father's last illness came on, and the proud old gentleman would not admit how ill he was, but tried to go about as usual, and sent no message to summon his eldest son, Mr Walter, the plotter, resolved to act. He knew where his father's will—giving the bulk of the large property to his first-born son—was kept. It was in an iron safe, too strong to be forced. The key was a patent one—thought also to defy imitation. Now it was that Mr Walter made use of his tools, of the two unscrupulous young clerks he had under his thumb. I—I may say so now—was a dab at mechanics, learned a trade as a chicken learns to peck; the joiner's work, or the smith's, was as child's play to me. At locks, I was especially clever, and vain of my knowledge.

'Crawley, on the other hand, was a beautiful penman. Engrossing, as the lawyers call it, is not an easy task for those who don't get their bread by it; but Judas could do it as well as you could have the job performed by any law-stationer in London. And the signatures too! He had practised old Mr Denham's a hundred and a thousand times, until it was perfect. But all Crawley's skill was of no good unless we could get the true will out of its hiding-place in the safe, and copy it, with the names of the witnesses, and the exact date, and only such alterations as were necessary to make Walter, instead of William,

the residuary legatee. And I toiled and filed and snipped at the picklock, while still the old banker tottered about, with death in his face, but uncomplaining, and resolute not to take to his bed, till he was forced to give way.

'At last I succeeded. The heavy iron door of the safe swung back, at the touch of the skeleton-key of my making; and Crawley sat up all night to write the false will. It was a marvel of patient dexterity. The witnesses' signatures—those of the testator—were marvellously imitated. And, after all, we were only just in time. Forty-eight hours after the ink was dry, old Mr Denham was stricken by the hand of death. The fraud was complete, and remained unsuspected.

'Dr Denham, without a doubt, relinquished the property—it was a large one—to his knave of a brother; and Walter Denham was rich—but—but'—He paused, gasping. It was not until cordials had been administered, and a short interval for repose, at the surgeon's suggestion, allowed, that the dying man was able to speak on. And when he did speak, it was in a thin, reedy voice, far feebler than before.

'Where was I?' he said faintly.—'Ah, yes; I remember now. Well, Mr Walter was rich; and we, who had helped him, thought that we had built up our own fortunes in building his. We didn't quite trust him, though, and we kept back the original will, the true one, instead of giving it up to him, as he wanted, to be burned. Crawley's notion that was. He swore to Mr Walter that he had destroyed the will, in a panic, he said, and for fear the thing should ever come to light. I don't think Walter Denham ever believed in the truth of that story; but he spoke us fair; it was his interest to do that; and we had money from him at the first, but not much—not much.

'The Fiend, they say—it was among Spaniards, in Cuba, I heard that—a superstitious set, the Dons, you know—has a habit of taking human shape to buy men's souls, and an ugly knack, too, of cheating them out of the purchase-money. I could almost believe, looking back on a wasted life, that Walter Denham, with his smooth tongue, had bought mine for a song. It was but dog's wages I got from him—a little cash, and many excuses, and then another dribble, and then grave looks and the cold-shoulder. He used to protest that he was straitened for money. I believe it was partly true. The old man, his father, had invested much capital in mining property and foreign securities that could not be at once realised; and then Walter Denham, for all his fits of extravagance, was a miser at heart.

'Well, he was rid of me, cheaply—only too cheaply; for I went abroad, knocked about the world, always hunting the Will-o'-the-Wisp, Fortune; and through much mire and many thorns did the jade lead me, till I came back, a middle-aged man, to England. Then I tried my old employer—accomplice, if you like—Mr Walter; and he all but snapped his fingers in my face. When I grew desperate, he loosed his purse-strings a bit; but at best it was a drop in the ocean, a crust flung to a dog. Crawley, sly hunk as he was, fared little better; but then Judas was a coward, and traded, too, on his varnish of respectability. Mr Walter always pleaded poverty—misers are sure to do it—had lost by specula-

tions, he said. It may have been so. My belief is that he doesn't quite know, from habit, when he tells the truth and when not. I feel a warning—time short, and nearly up'— He ceased to speak, and even the wine they gave him revived his failing strength but partially. 'Write down my address,' he made shift to say, after a pause—'Number nine Chapel Street, Hoxton Road—decent crib enough—the last place in which the police—the landlady will let you have my traps, when you prove to her where, and how, I was struck off the roster—and I have got'—

'The will?' suggested Bertram, stooping over the bed.

'No; not the will. Judas—I mean Crawley—was a deal too close-fisted a customer to part with that, and he has got it with him still, I know. No; but the key is there—and—the rough draft of the will, in Crawley's hand, and notes from him and Mr Walter both—kept against a rainy day. I am going fast!' And he really did seem to be going, as a foundering ship, low in the water, and settling by the head, prepares for the last dread plunge.

'But Crawley—his address—you have not told us that?' said the magistrate.

The sick man's energy revived a little. 'Notting Hill,' he said weakly—'one of those poky little streets, that all look alike, round the church; Melbourne Street, number four. He does not pass for Crawley there. They call him'— It took stimulants, it took time before Nat Lee, brought very low now, was able to whisper the words—'Richardson is the name he goes by. A rare trick to play to old Judas!'

His deposition, or the substance of it, had been written down with patient care; and now it was read over to him, and, with much trouble, he was enabled, with feeble fingers, to affix a shaky signature to the paper, and to make formal affirmation of the truth of its contents. That exertion over, he sank back exhausted, muttering, and stirring from side to side, and then fell into a heavy slumber.

'He will never awake,' whispered the house-surgeon.

'If he does,' said Bertram gently, 'I will take care of him; and if he dies, at my cost shall the poor wretch be laid among his kindred at Dulchester.'

THE INSECTARIUM AT THE ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS.

It has long been a matter for regret that in the large and varied zoological collection which finds a home in the far-famed Gardens in Regent's Park, the insect world should have hitherto not met with the consideration it undoubtedly deserves. A few moments' reflection will remind us that the well-being of man is both ministered to and impeded by friends and foes to be found in the humble ranks of insect life. As instances it will suffice to mention the silkworm, 'that spins a queen's most costly robe,' and the industrious bee, which supplies us with honey and wax. As enemies to man may be named the mosquito and centipede, and the destructive caterpillars of many of our moths and butterflies.

The Zoological Society have, however, taken a preliminary step towards the wider diffusion of

knowledge respecting insects by the establishment of what is termed an 'Insectarium,' wherein are shown various species of insects, both living and preserved specimens in their different stages of existence, and, to the small extent that present circumstances allow, under natural conditions. Thus, one is now able to trace an insect such as a moth through its transformation-stages of egg, larva or caterpillar, pupa or chrysalis, and imago or perfect insect.

The building which has been set apart for the purpose is situated at the north side of the Gardens, near the foot of Primrose Hill, and is a simple hot-house, somewhat less than fifty feet long and about half the width. In the centre and at the ends of the house are placed some bananas and tree-ferns; and by means of heating apparatus a temperature of from seventy to seventy-five degrees Fahrenheit is maintained. The insects are kept in cases of wood and zinc, with glass sides and perforated zinc tops, the average size of these receptacles being about two and a half feet in height, one foot and a half wide, and one foot deep. The bottom of each cage is filled with moss and sand, thus allowing the pupæ or chrysalides of such species as enter the ground to undergo their natural transformations. In some cases the caterpillars—or larvæ, as they are scientifically termed—are to be seen feeding, the food-plants being kept in small phials or tubes of water, or sometimes placed in the moist sand. The collection at present is but a small one; but the specimens are well chosen, including representatives of many of the most interesting and beautiful species from different parts of the globe.

Immediately on entering the glass-house, the visitor finds to the right and left of him cases appropriated to the various descriptions of silk-producing moths. Here, for instance, is the magnificent Atlas Moth, of a rich chocolate hue, with paler markings, and silvery transparent spots. This species, we are informed by the descriptive label, is an inhabitant of India, and one of the largest moths known, some specimens measuring as much as eight inches from tip to tip of the forewings. Some of its cocoons, in which the insects wrap themselves while becoming chrysalides, are likewise to be seen, manufactured of silk and dead leaves. Near this is the Ailanthus Moth, from China, a specimen of which has just emerged from the chrysalis, and is of a tawny colour, with delicate pink and silvery markings and beautiful eye-like spots. In another case are feeding a number of larvæ of the Cecropian Silk Moth. The colours of the caterpillars are most brilliant, the ground tint being a bright green, with little fleshy tufts of red, blue, and yellow, each surmounted by six black hairs. There are many other species of silk moths exhibited, of which may be mentioned the Japanese Oak Silk Moth, whose bright green caterpillars are to be seen eagerly devouring oak-leaves; and Perny's Silk Moth, the larvæ of which are similarly engaged. The chrysalides and cocoons of most of these species, together with samples of the raw silk they produce, are shown in the cases side by side with the perfect insects. We miss, however, our old and more sombre-tinted friend, the Common Silkworm Moth (*Bombyx mori*), who certainly deserves a place in the series, as the silk he produces is superior in many

respects to that furnished by his larger and more handsome relatives. The pale-green Moon Moths, from India and North America, of which specimens are shown in cases to the left of the entrance, deserve mention for the loveliness and delicacy of their tints. These, however, soon fade, as may be seen by comparing the newly emerged insect with the preserved specimens above it.

In one of the cases is to be seen a common foe of moths and butterflies, in the shape of the Ichneumon Fly, the female of which is furnished with a curious apparatus for depositing her eggs beneath the skin of certain caterpillars; these eggs quickly hatch, and the resulting larvæ, carefully avoiding the vital parts, feed upon the body of their host. The larva thus preyed upon is frequently able to change to the chrysalis state, but from this it never emerges as a perfect insect, the ichneumon grubs finally making a meal of all but its skin, within which they in turn become pupæ, and at length appear as ill-favoured-looking flies. These parasites are of great service in checking the too rapid multiplication of destructive kinds of insects, the caterpillars selected for their attacks being usually the brightly coloured and smooth-skinned sorts.

Perhaps the most lovely specimens in the Insectarium are the Morpho Butterflies, shown in a glass case on the centre table. They are large insects, measuring about four or five inches across the wings, which are of an exquisite blue satin appearance, with pearly bands of white. Three different species are exhibited, all being inhabitants of South America.

Although our British insects cannot vie with the gorgeous colouring of their tropical congeners, they are nevertheless many of them of great beauty. Here, for instance, in a cage much too small for a 'winged being of air,' are some freshly disclosed examples of the Swallowtail Butterfly, the largest British species, found principally in the fens of Cambridgeshire. They are noble insects on the wing, and have great powers of flight. But the most graceful of our English butterflies in its aerial evolutions is the White Admiral, of which, as we write, a living specimen is to be seen in a neighbouring case. This species is chiefly met with in the New Forest; it seems to float gently but rapidly through the air, every now and then settling high up on the trees, or descending to the bramble bushes, for which it has a great partiality. The caterpillar feeds on the honeysuckle, and the perfect insect, though not rare in its own particular haunts, is greatly prized by entomologists. The colours of the upper wings are simply black and white, beautifully diversified; while beneath there are delicate pencillings of light brown and silvery blue. Close to the White Admirals are specimens of the handsome Purple Emperor Butterfly, a still greater prize, and an insect with similar silvan propensities. It frequents the tops of oak-trees, but can be tempted to descend from this exalted position by a bait of decaying animal matter, such as a dead dog or rat. Here are some specimens of the different sorts of Tiger Moths in their various stages, and among them our old black hairy friends the 'woolly bears,' or in scientific parlance the larvæ of *Chelonia cava*, the Garden Tiger Moth. These caterpillars are very abundant upon white nettles, docks, and other low-

growing plants, and the resulting moths are among the most handsome of our native species.

A closely allied species to the Tiger Moths is the pretty Gold-tailed Moth, whose wings are pure white, with a tuft of yellow hair at the end of the creature's body, which gives it its name. The caterpillars, of which living specimens are shown feeding, are black and hairy, with bright scarlet markings, rendering them very conspicuous objects upon the whitethorn and wild-rose bushes in our hedgerows during the early summer. The reader must be cautioned, however, should he meet with these caterpillars in his rambles, against handling them, if his skin be at all tender; for they possess what are called 'urticating' properties, causing great irritation of the skin in some persons, accompanied even with a swelling of the parts affected, which is by no means easily got rid of. In his excellent little book on *The Common Objects of the Country*, the Rev. J. G. Wood relates his experience with the Gold-tailed larvæ, which appears to have been particularly painful and unpleasant. The insect is a common one, and frequents the neighbourhood of London.

Whilst writing of London, we may mention two moths, also included in the collection under review, which are abundant even in the heart of the Metropolis itself. The first is the Brindled Beauty, a somewhat dingy brown insect, with semi-transparent wings, which inhabits most of the London squares, and can be found on the trunks of the trees in the month of April. The caterpillar of this species is very destructive to the lilacs and limes, and is of a dark-brown, stick-like appearance, and belongs to the family of Geometers or 'loopers,' so called from their peculiar mode of progression. The second moth alluded to is the Vapourer, of a rich chestnut-brown colour, with a white spot on each fore-wing. It may be seen flying in the streets and squares, in its own peculiar and characteristic manner, all through the summer, during the hottest part of the day. Curiously enough, however, the female is wingless, and more resembles a spider than a moth. The larva of this species, like that of the Brindled Beauty, is a great pest on account of its partiality for young foliage.

We must not omit to notice the caterpillar of the Goat Moth (*Cossus ligniperda*), whose evil odour proclaims its proximity to us. This is one of the 'zylophagous' or wood-eating larvæ, so destructive—as the name *ligniperda* implies—to our forest trees, especially oak, willow, and poplar, within whose trunks it feeds for a term of three years. The jaws of this caterpillar are very powerful, and it has been known to eat through a piece of sheet-lead. It is a repulsive-looking creature, reddish-brown above, and flesh-coloured beneath; and we cannot envy the ancient Roman epicures with whom it is generally believed this larva was a favourite dish.

An interesting feature in the Insectarium is the exhibition of several examples of what is called 'protective mimicry;' that is, the power possessed by many species of assimilating themselves, either in form or colour, or both, to their surroundings, in such a manner as to enable them to elude the vigilance of enemies. Let us select one or two typical instances. In one of the cases are living specimens of the Lappet Moth (*Bombyx quercifolia*), which has a peculiar method of folding its

wings. These are of a brown hue, with various markings, and when at rest upon dead leaves, the shape and colour of the insect render it scarcely distinguishable from the leaves, except to a practised eye. The specific name *quercifolia* may possibly have been bestowed in allusion to this peculiarity.

A noteworthy instance of the protection secured to caterpillars by their similarity to their food-plants, is afforded in the case of the larvæ of the Emperor Moth, a species closely allied to the silk-producing moths mentioned at the beginning of this paper. These larvæ are of a bright green colour, with raised pink dots, surrounded by black rings, a colouring which would naturally be considered most conspicuous; and if we are to judge from the caterpillars in the collection feeding on plum-leaves, it is difficult to understand how the food-plant can possibly guard them from observation. Their natural food, however, is the heather, and its prevailing colours being pink and green, the Emperor caterpillars of similar tints may easily be overlooked.

This subject of mimetic analogy is an exceedingly interesting phase of insect life, and one which has engaged the attention of many eminent naturalists, notably Mr A. R. Wallace, to whose published writings the reader is referred for further information on the matter.

One of the glass cases on the centre table appears to contain nothing but sand, within which are to be seen funnel-shaped depressions; but beneath these lie concealed the larvæ of that curious insect the Ant Lion. Every now and then, these cunning creatures cast up a quantity of sand, the object of which is to overwhelm the ants, and so cause them to fall down one of the holes, when they become an easy prey. A marvel of skilful industry is the Trap-door Spider's nest, composed of earth and silk in alternate layers, of which there are sometimes as many as forty. There is a hinged lid to the nest, which fits tightly, even requiring some little force to open; and the colour of its tenement secures to the spider immunity from observation, whilst he can open the door to obtain his prey, and close it on the approach of enemies.

Before bidding adieu to the Insectarium, of whose varied contents we have afforded but an outline sketch, we must not forget to mention the aquatic insects exhibited in their native element, among which the handsome yet voracious Dytiscus beetle, and his more sombre and harmless brother the *Hydrous piceus*, deserve notice, as also the larvæ of the Dragon-fly, and the curious Caddis cases with their worm-like tenants.

From the foregoing remarks it will be evident that the collection of insects at the Zoological Gardens is one of no common interest; and though at present it can only be regarded as the nucleus of a larger and more comprehensive undertaking, it has already met with a favourable reception, and well deserves a visit from all who are interested in natural history.

It is to be hoped that the eminent Society under whose auspices the Insectarium has been formed, will see their way to make it of use to the farmer and horticulturist, by bringing together the various insect foes with which they have to contend, and by exemplifying the methods which have been found efficacious in preventing the

attacks of insects upon our forest and fruit trees, and garden plants, &c. Such collections have already been successfully established in a few places, among which may be specially named those of the Free Library and Museum at Exeter, and the Exhibition of Economic Entomology at Bethnal Green; but the facilities at the disposal of the Zoological Society will doubtless enable them, should they make the attempt, to effect such an addition to their already famous collection, as shall render it one of paramount excellence and utility.

CAPTAIN DESMOND'S DAUGHTER.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER II.

DINNER was over, to which, notwithstanding the loss of her appetite, Mrs Desmond contrived to do tolerable justice; and Margaret and her step-mother were seated in the drawing-room. The saffrons and yellows of an April sunset still lingered in the west; but the lamp had been lighted, and in the grate a log cracked and blazed, for the spring evenings had still a touch of winter in them. Mrs Desmond sat in a low chair, with her fan in her hand, sometimes shading her face from the light of the lamp, sometimes from the blaze of the burning log. She would sit for hours at a time with her fan in her hand, doing absolutely nothing.

Margaret had been writing two or three notes; but the last envelope was directed, and she now sat with the pen between her fingers, wondering how the evening was to be got through, and longing for the hour to come when she could go to her own room and be alone.

'I suppose you wondered what in the world brought your father and me to this out-of-the-world place?' queried Mrs Desmond presently.

'No; I don't think I wondered,' said Margaret. 'I presumed that my father had some good and sufficient reason for coming here.'

'The state of my health was the main reason. I had lost my appetite; I had become low and languid. The doctors said I wanted bracing, and that somewhere on the east coast would suit me best. Marmaduke saw an advertisement respecting this place in *The Times*, and at once made inquiries about it. The owner was ordered to a warm climate for his health—just the reverse of my case—and wanted to leave his house for the next five or six months in charge of some one whom he could trust to take proper care of it. Of course, in a neighbourhood like this, with no scenery, no society, and no large town within a distance of twenty miles, Mr Earle could not expect to let his house in the ordinary way. He was content to secure a trustworthy tenant who would see that his property did not deteriorate during his absence. That tenant he found in my poor Marmaduke.' Mrs Desmond paused for a moment to use her vinaigrette; then she resumed: 'We have been here just six weeks—or rather, I have. Your father was away on business a great deal, and I found it rather lonely at first; but I was gradually getting to like the place. Such a contrast, you know, from Brighton or Scarborough. Then again, my poor Marmaduke had been very much harassed of late; many of his speculations had turned out unfortunately; and people were importuning him

for money on every side. All he needed was time to recover himself. Meanwhile, it was a great relief to him to be able, whenever he chose, to come down to Mardon for a few days of perfect quiet. No importunate creditor ever dreamed of looking for him here; in fact, his address was a secret.

It never entered Margaret's mind to inquire as to the nature of the speculations in which her father was said to have been so unfortunate. Perhaps she had not forgotten the kind of speculations to which he had been addicted when she was a child and her mother was still alive—speculations which always seemed to have some connection either with horses or cards. But to whatever class Captain Desmond's commercial ventures of a later date may have pertained, his widow did not seem to think it needful to allude to them further.

'Did my father never complain of being ill?' asked Margaret. 'Had you no idea that his health was failing?'

'Of late, as I have said, he had been somewhat harassed in his mind; but his bodily health had never seemed better than during the last six months. He came home last Monday evening, rather unexpectedly, after an absence of five days. He was in excellent spirits, having had what he termed "a slice of luck." He was as buoyant and full of nonsense as a boy of twenty, and would insist upon having champagne at table—you know, dear, that he always had a little weakness for champagne—although I wanted him to be content with Sauterne. Well, dinner was over, and he had just poured out the last glass of wine, when all at once he complained of feeling faint. Looking across at him, I saw a sudden change in his face, that frightened me. I was by his side in a moment. My arms were round him, and he let his head rest on my shoulder. He tried to speak; but I could not tell what he said. Then his eyes closed, and he seemed to know nothing more. I screamed for help; and Elspeth and the girl came running in. We lifted him, and laid him on the sofa—he knew nothing of it, poor darling!—and then the girl ran off for the doctor. Fortunately, he was at home—there is not another medical man within half-a-dozen miles—and he came at once. His grave face when he saw your father only served to confirm my own fears. Everything was done that his skill could suggest; but to no avail. My darling husband never opened his eyes—never spoke again. But so peaceful and quiet was his end, that we scarcely knew the moment when he left us.' Mrs Desmond pressed her perfumed handkerchief to her eyes as she finished her narrative. Margaret turned away her head, and let her tears flow in silence.

Presently, Elspeth came in, and closed the shutters and lighted another lamp.

'An invaluable creature that,' remarked Mrs Desmond as the serving-woman left the room. 'I should have been lost without her at a time like this.'

'Has she been with you long?' asked Margaret. 'She came with us when we came to this place. She was out of a situation at the time, and having known her several years previously, I at once engaged her. She has the highest of recommendations from her previous employers.'

Again Margaret's conscience pricked her. Because there was something in Elspeth's looks

that she did not like, she had felt her dislike extend to the woman herself. What childish, unreasonable prejudices were these!

'Do you think of remaining at Larch Cottage for the remainder of your term?' asked Miss Desmond by-and-by.

'Good gracious, no, my dear! I could not bear to stay in the place after what has happened here. So lonely, too! I shall get away from it as quickly as possible. I have several friends here and there, and shall spend two or three months among them, while my affairs are being settled. Ultimately, I shall probably go abroad, and reside there *en permanence*. The English climate is too trying for me; and I have a brother settled in France, as no doubt you are aware.'

Margaret had not been aware of anything of the kind; but there was nothing in that. Mrs Desmond was not in the habit of talking about either her relatives or her antecedents, and might have half-a-dozen brothers, for anything Margaret knew to the contrary.

The ladies separated early. Miss Desmond was tired with her journey, and was glad to be alone. She had many things to think about. Sleep was long in visiting her eyes; but it came at length. In a half-slumberous state she heard, or fancied that she heard, a clock in some other part of the house begin to strike the hour. 'Surely that must be midnight,' she said to herself; and she began to count the strokes; but before the clock had ceased to strike, she was fast asleep, and knew nothing more. How long she had slept, she did not know; but she awoke suddenly from a dream about her father. It was still quite dark, and for a moment or two she could not call to mind where she was. Then, as with a flash, everything came back to her. Wide awake she lay, feeling that sleep had fled far from her, and longing for the first gleam of daylight. She would rise and dress, and go out before any one else in the house was astir. She would go down to the room where her father lay in his coffin, and kneel for a little while by his side. Then she would quit the house, and find her way to the shore, and wander about alone, drinking in the solitary beauty of the morning. Meanwhile, darkness and silence brooded everywhere.

All at once she heard a sound—the sound of a footfall in the room immediately over her own. Could it be Elspeth or the girl who was stirring thus early? Then she remembered how Mrs Desmond had told her that the whole of the rooms on the upper floor had been locked up, and the keys taken away by Mr Earle. This thought was still in her mind, when she heard the footsteps again clearly and unmistakably. Of a surety, there was some one in the room over her own. Whoever that some one might be, he or she walked slowly across the room, and then paused for a few moments, as it might be to peer out of the window, and then walked slowly back again. There was no other sound anywhere.

By this time, Margaret was sitting up in bed and listening, as she seemed never to have listened before. Her heart was beating quickly; vague horrors thrilled her nerves; there was upon her that dread of the unknown, which is far removed from ordinary fear. Suppose the footsteps should come down-stairs!—suppose they should pause at her door—suppose they should enter her room! She remembered, not without a little

thrill of terror, that there was no key in the lock of the door. Any one might come in who chose to do so.

But next moment she laughed at herself for her foolish fears. What a fuss to make, because she happened to hear some footsteps in the dark for which she could not account! Had she heard them by daylight, she should have thought nothing of them. And yet the question would recur: Whose footsteps could they be? She heard them again and again—three or four times in all—at intervals of a few minutes. After that, she heard them no more, although she lay listening upwards of an hour. By-and-by she fell asleep again, and did not awake till broad daylight.

As she lay listening in the dark, she had determined to make mention of the footsteps to Mrs Desmond, and ask her for a solution of the mystery. But, as it happened, Mrs Desmond breakfasted in her own room that morning, and Margaret saw nothing of her till later in the day, and then she had other and more serious matters to occupy her thoughts.

Margaret went out in the course of the morning, and found her way to the little church on the hill where her father's grave was already dug; and as she made her way slowly back through the lanes, she gathered a few wild-flowers to strew on her father's coffin.

On Saturday, the funeral took place. It had been Margaret's intention to start back for London the same evening; but she found there was no train by which she could do so, and that she must perforce stay where she was till Monday morning. Mrs Desmond was evidently pleased that she should do so.

As they sat together on their return from church on Sunday afternoon, Mrs Desmond said: 'I have no doubt, dear, that you naturally feel a little anxious to know the contents of your father's will.'

'My father's will!' exclaimed Margaret. 'I did not know that there was any such document in existence.'

'Did you not know that your father had insured his life for a very considerable amount, immediately after his marriage with me?'

'No. This is the first time I have heard of such a thing.'

'You surprise me. Such, however, is the fact. Captain Desmond said he did not choose that in case of his death I should be left without resources. The insurance he effected was for ten thousand pounds, divided among various offices. It was so noble and good of him.' Mrs Desmond paused for a moment to press her handkerchief to her eyes. 'As it happened, I had a small annuity left me by my first husband,' resumed Mrs Desmond. 'This annuity was just sufficient in amount to cover the premium on the insurance, and was to be set aside for that purpose. The will is in the hands of Mr Benson, a solicitor, and an old friend of your father. I shall have to administer it; but I suppose some months will have to elapse before the insurance people finally settle with me. I shall find it a tiresome affair, I do not doubt.'

Again there was a pause, which Margaret had no inclination to break. Mrs Desmond looked at her, and thought she had never seen a young person so devoid of natural or even laudable curiosity. 'You

will find that your father has not forgotten you in his will,' resumed the elder lady.

Margaret started. 'Not forgotten me! I do not understand you,' she said.

'And yet my words are plain enough. Captain Desmond by his will bequeaths to you, his only child, a legacy of one thousand pounds.'

Margaret was astounded, and knew not what to say.

'Beyond the legacy in question, everything is left to me,' pursued Mrs Desmond, with an air of pious resignation. 'I must seek out some safe investment. I ought to be able to get five per cent. interest for my money, at the very least.'

The Sunday evening passed. Margaret bade Mrs Desmond good-night, and retired to her room, glad that Monday morning was so close at hand. There would be time for one last visit to the churchyard after breakfast. The train by which she intended to travel started at eleven o'clock. Before getting into bed she left a night-light burning on the chimney-piece. She had found a box of lights in her room, the morning after she heard the footsteps, and, actuated she hardly knew by what feeling, she had burnt one each night since. Although she had lain awake for a long time each night, she had not heard the footsteps again. She was wakeful and restless; but after a time she fell asleep. She had been asleep for some hours, when she suddenly opened her eyes, impressed with the strange sensation which sometimes makes itself felt even in profound slumber, that some one was looking intently at her. She opened her eyes, and saw that another pair of eyes were gazing fixedly at her no great distance away. She had scarcely time to wonder why this should be so, before she recognised, with a thrill of unspeakable joy, which changed an instant later into one of immeasurable awe, not unmingled with horror, that he who was looking so earnestly at her was none other than her father!

The light that burned in the room was dim; but it was impossible that she should mistake the features of that well-loved face for those of any one else. His body was partly hidden by the curtains at the head of the bed, and at the moment she opened her eyes he was leaning over towards her, as if to see her more clearly. A low cry broke from her lips, and she started up in bed. As she did so, her father's figure vanished behind the curtains. She rubbed her eyes, and looked again; but he was certainly no longer there. Bewildered, awe-struck, and still feeling only half awake, she slipped out of bed, and putting forth a timid hand, drew the curtains aside, as though half expecting, half dreading to find him hidden behind them. But no one was there.

Then she went to the door, which was on the same side of the room as the bed, and opened it. She was under the impression that she had shut it, on entering her room for the night; but that was a point on which she could not be quite positive, and in any case, it was not shut now. There was nothing to prevent any one from entering her room when she was asleep. She now opened the door wide, and ventured out a few steps into the corridor. It was a clear night, and the stars shone brightly through the window at the opposite end. She could see the entire length of the passage, and make out the positions of the

different doors that opened into it. There was certainly no one there but herself.

The door of Mrs Desmond's room was exactly opposite her own. This door Margaret now ventured to try with her hand. It yielded to her touch and opened. She advanced a step or two and looked into the room. All was dark within, far darker than in the corridor, curtains being drawn across the windows. The only sound that broke the intense silence was Mrs Desmond's low quiet breathing as she slept.

Margaret withdrew as softly as she had entered, and went back to her own room and shut the door. She had still the same awe-struck feeling at her heart, she was still as utterly bewildered as at first. She lighted her candle at the little night-light, and drew a thick shawl round her shoulders, and sat down to think. That she had in very truth seen her father, she should never doubt, to the last day of her life. She had heard and read of cases where, for some mysterious purpose, the dead had been allowed for a few brief moments to revisit the living. Could this be such a case? Could her father's intense longing to see her have been powerful enough to enable him to carry out his wish? Or had she, after all, only been the victim of a by no means uncommon form of hallucination? She was very loath to believe the latter. But it was all a mystery, and one which, in all probability, she would never be enabled to unravel, as long as she lived.

LIFE IN CANADA.

BY ONE WHO HAS BEEN MORE THAN TWENTY YEARS A RESIDENT THERE.

THOUGH we have already upon more than one occasion offered hints to intending emigrants, the importance of the subject and the interest it seems to evoke, encourage us in publishing the following supplementary observations from a Canadian resident.

Some years ago, says our correspondent, it was my privilege to contribute a few pages to one of the leading periodicals on the subject of Canada and the emigrant's prospects there; and now, after more than twenty years' residence, a further narrative of my experiences, especially of the rural and out-of-the-way districts, may prove interesting to some who think of emigrating, or who have friends here.

During the past twenty years, manifold and portentous changes have taken place in this country. Tracts of it almost unknown before, are now intersected by railways, conveniently connected together, and dotted over with thriving villages; while smiling homesteads and well-cultivated farms replace the dense bush and swamps that formerly prevailed. Those acquainted only with the old-world cities and towns, have little idea of the gourd-like rapidity with which villages spring up in this country. Simple board or lath-and-plaster houses of from five to six rooms, can be built and rendered habitable within a week. The former are sometimes occupied before the walls are plastered inside. A tavern is generally the nucleus of a village. Then come a general store and post-office, followed by the inevitable black-

smith's and shoemaker's shops; and the village is established. In a year or two afterwards, there will most likely be several streets. The houses, isolated at first, gradually approximate towards each other. Brick takes the place of stone as the buildings increase; and the first small tenements are moved away on rollers to some back street, where they suit the means and convenience of the less wealthy inhabitants.

Among the first buildings of any size are churches of Protestant denominations—for Canadians are pre-eminently a church-going people. Thus it follows that, as every year brings out its thousands of immigrants, almost all of them in the prime of life, they push on to cheap lands, which still lie uncleared; make a purchase of fifty or a hundred acres, pay a small sum down, and obtaining a long day in which to pay up the balance, settle themselves in the primeval forest. Some are fortunate enough to get the shelter of a fellow-settler's shanty, generally an edifice of most primitive structure, about sixteen feet by twelve, put up in a few hours. It is built of rough logs, notched at the corners, so as to fit into each other firmly; the roof being of bark or slabs. The openings between the logs are filled up with mortar or moss, and one window and door suffice. In such a dwelling, some dozen or more people will sleep comfortably and healthily, while perhaps the snow still lingers in the late spring, and drifts through the chinks of their rustic shanty. Of both air and heat they have abundance, for the great cooking-stoves of modern days have quite superseded the wide fire-places of old times. The latter are now seldom seen; while the former sending forth an equable and all-pervading heat, are greatly preferable to the hearth and its cold wide chimney.

Those immigrants who are not so favoured as to have such friendly shelter, try to avoid taking their families into the bush while snow continues to fall, as it sometimes does until April. At times, a large family 'go in,' and camp out; some in the wagon, some under it, thus managing till the shanty or house be ready. Should the weather prove favourable—and we have no long-continued rain here—they will generally have enough of ground cleared to give them plenty of potatoes for the first year, and perhaps some grain. Thus a farm is commenced which may in the course of ten years have a good house and barns on it, a bearing orchard, and good fences all round and through it.

Now, in the foregoing I have just given a slight sketch of what has been going on in newly opened sections of this country since I first came to it. But this old state of things as regards hardship and difficulty has in these days of numerous railways and other convenient means of travelling, all but passed away. In fact, the almost overpowering difficulties and obstacles which used to beset the settler's path twenty or thirty years ago, have been greatly meliorated. Many of the conveniences of modern life, formerly not to be had here, or at best confined to a favoured few, are now within the easy grasp of all. Added to which is the fact, that money is more plentiful, because of the general prosperity of the country.

It is usual with immigrants to choose locations that are most easy of access; hence the best lots are seized upon first; yet, says the *Atlas of Ontario*,

'vast tracts of uncleared land are still in the hands of the government of Ontario, awaiting the advent of the settler. There are large quantities of wild land inviting the labour of the backwoodsman, which, when cleared and improved, will be equal to not a few of the older and improved settlements. There are in the province of Ontario the following number of acres: In total area, 77,606,400; total surveyed, 25,297,480; total granted and sold, 21,879,048. These are the figures of some two or three years since; but allowing for the work of those years, there are still some three million and a half acres of surveyed government lands not yet taken up, and more than fifty millions of acres not yet surveyed. The free-grant lands in Ontario are worthy the attention alike of the immigrant, and of parties already resident in the country who are desirous of possessing freehold farms, but whose means are limited. The provincial government have thrown open, upon the most liberal terms, a number of townships, into any of which parties may go and select for themselves the site of a future home. Thus over three million acres are before them; and every head of a family can obtain, *gratis*, two hundred acres of land; and any person arrived at the age of eighteen may obtain one hundred acres in the free-grant districts. This offer is made by the government to all persons without distinction of sex; so that a large family having several members of it at or past eighteen years of age, may take up a large tract, and become in a few years, when the land is cleared and improved, joint possessors of a valuable estate. The settlement duties are: to have fifteen acres, on each grant of one hundred acres, cleared and under crop, of which at least two acres are to be cleared and cultivated annually for five years; to build a habitable house, at least sixteen by twenty feet in size; and to reside on the land at least six months in each year. In the older settled townships, farmers possessing moderate means can readily purchase or lease suitable farms of from one to two hundred acres, more or less cleared and improved.'

I know of one farmer who, some ten or twelve years ago, got a free grant of a thousand-acre island among the lovely lakes of Muskoka. He had a large family of sons and daughters; and now the same island is divided among them in fine farms, and they have made their own roads, &c., in it.

The generality of people in the old country have no idea of the vast extent of Canada. Ontario, for instance, is larger than the United Kingdom. Yet it is only a small part of the Dominion of Canada, which is nearly as large as Europe. When I first came here, I hated the country, and pined for home, as I still call it. I love my native land, and think there is nowhere in this wide world to compare with it as a place of residence, if one could only afford to live there. I brought my family to this country when, in point of years, they were all helpless; and we had to contend with many disadvantages, and with very heavy trials and bereavements; yet it has pleased Providence to bring us out of them all. As to whether I or my family should all have been so well provided for, had we remained in the mother-country, one cannot tell; but speaking as I know, I think we should not.

The principal objection I have ever had to this country is the severe winter. It is now the beginning of April, and snow well frozen lies round in piles. The sun is warm and bright, but the frost-king still reigns. Cold is never felt within doors, because of the stoves and other appliances for comfort. The summers are delightful, and they last about six months. The other six are not much else than winter, so far as cold goes.

Since I left my native land, I have visited it some two or three times; and on each occasion was most unwillingly convinced, that for those whose means of subsistence are precarious in the old country, Canada is in most cases the better place. It is a land of peace and plenty. In rural districts, the people may leave out their stock night after night without fear of their being taken or injured. They can also omit barring and bolting doors during the night, and can travel about at all hours without heed of six-shooters or loaded sticks. If they fail to succeed in one thing, they can take up another, not being fettered by laws and customs of class.

I also noticed another item when at home, namely, that Canadians are far ahead of the mother-country in possessing handy, easily managed farming implements. Consequently, they can cultivate large farms with fewer hands and fewer horses than is the custom in the United Kingdom. Very few farmers here are without reaping and mowing machines, seeding-machines, cultivators, &c. Labourers, or, as they style them, 'hired men,' are well paid. No one need be idle who is willing and able to work; and if they have assiduity and good character, they will do well. Though only a few may rise to opulence, *all* may be independent.

I know one kindly honest fellow who borrowed his passage-money to come here. He engaged with a wealthy farmer at eight dollars per month, with board and lodging, for the first six months. So well did he fulfil his duties, that at the end of three years he had twenty dollars per month with board. Meantime, he sent home money enough to bring out his father and four other members of his family. All these at once obtained employment in farmers' houses; some of them also learned to read and write with their employers' children; and they are all independent now, while their elder brother and forerunner has a good farm of his own, well stocked. All this took place in the course of ten years.

A large proportion of our doctors, lawyers, and clergymen are the sons of farmers—I mean *working* farmers—for the public schools here are on such a basis and principle, that any young men who wish can fit themselves for entering college. The fine libraries, such as the Mechanics' Institute, where works by the best authors can be had for a trifling subscription, are most advantageous in raising the moral and mental standard; and when a town can claim some two thousand inhabitants, the government, on application, will give a yearly grant, paid annually towards the library. Daily and weekly papers of all kinds are also very cheap and numerous. The natural consequence of all this is, that the people are generally more intelligent and better informed than the same class would be in the mother-country; and that conscious of their own power and their many re-

sources, they are thoroughly self-reliant and independent.

Some writers are prone to represent even the well-settled districts as far behind in civilisation. I cannot say so, and I wish to give a truthful account. Where I now reside, there is a smart village, containing churches of nearly all denominations, with some fine hotels and private residences. In the smooth lawns of these residences, during summer evenings, the click of the croquet mallet and the gaiety of the lawn-tennis players may be heard. When I take a drive into the country, I meet well-dressed men and women in comfortable vehicles; and if I pay a visit at any of their houses, I find modern furniture, pianos, organs, &c. Yet this district, twelve or fifteen years ago, was almost a mass of solid bush.

Riding on horseback is a favourite amusement, and as a general rule, the people here are well mounted in every way; and though the girls do not ride to the meet, as in England, yet I have seen some well mounted and equipped, from saddle to elegant silver-tipped riding-whip, riding alone on the quiet roads.

Wolves and bears always retire to uninhabited districts. The echo of the chopper's axe is not agreeable to their ears. I could never find any one who was molested by these animals, except those who came to this country thirty or forty years ago. If I be not mistaken, five dollars per head are allowed by government for these marauders; so that for this reason, if for no other, their numbers must decrease.

The Colorado beetle, or potato-bug, is troublesome and destructive; but since the use of Paris Green has become general, they are not much dreaded. A small proportion of this poison sprinkled on the plants when the insects first appear, will kill the first crop of them; and a second application in the course of some weeks, will almost exterminate them; all that remain will do no harm in one season. They burrow in the earth, and reappear to lay their eggs next summer. At first, people used to pick them off the plants; but that is seldom done now. The midge used to be fatal in the wheat; but since the introduction of what is called the midge-proof wheat, that scourge has almost disappeared.

As to the price of land, the advertisements show that improved farms, with house, barns, &c., can be had in good districts at from fifty to eighty dollars per acre, according to locality. For instance, near a city the prices would be higher. Outside this village—which is about seventy miles north of Toronto—two hundred acres of uncleared land, covered with beech and maple, without house or fences, were sold for thirty-five dollars per acre—about seven pounds sterling.

And now about the Indians. I remember my own ideas on the subject, culled from hearsay, or from the writings of various authors. I imagined them as painted, beaded, and befathered; and in this as well as other things respecting them, I soon found my mistake. Two or three years ago, a number of them encamped within half a mile of my residence. They travel about from place to place, and pitch their tents where there are plenty of elm-trees, of which they make all kinds of baskets, from the flat butcher's basket to the large round basket that holds a bushel; besides all kinds of ornamental satchels and

articles suitable for carrying in the hand. Winter is the time they choose for this employment, generally coming to the camping-place in October, and remaining till March or April.

I went into the bush to see them. It was a sheltered spot, a short distance from the road. Snow covered the ground; and the blue smoke curled from the tops of their tents through the tall trees overhead. Very pretty and romantic, some of my readers will say. Well, yes; in a painting; but not at all so when seen in reality. There were about a dozen tents. The first day I went to see them was Sunday, and the tents were closed up. They pitch these generally by chopping down posts of about six feet high, with crutches on the tops, to hold horizontal pieces or straight limbs of trees. This frame they cover with boards—if they can get them—quilts, or sheets, perhaps eked out with an old garment or two; altogether a patched, shabby-looking arrangement. A large square opening is left in the peak of the roof, to let out the smoke, for they keep up large fires day and night in their tents. I went into two or three of them. In one which was about twelve feet square, I saw about eight or ten people of all ages, from the baby, which swung from the roof in a small birch-bark cradle or cot just its own size, to the hideous old crone who may have been its great-grandmother. A great wood-fire blazed in the centre, round the ashes of which crouched the children; one of them perfectly white, with red hair, supposed to have been kidnapped. Benches covered with soft pine branches and mats lined the sides of the tent. By night they served for beds, by day for seats. I was invited to sit down, but declined, as the Indians do not practically believe that cleanliness is next to godliness. They are naturally indolent, and in most cases will only work when impelled by hunger. They will never hire out and earn, or bind themselves to work like white men; and would not barter their freedom for money.

In another tent, I saw a comely woman, who had her small dwelling neat and clean. She spoke good English, and was tidy in her person. She belonged to their 'upper ten,' being the wife or daughter of one of their chiefs. I went to see them again on a week-day, and found them all at work, making baskets and mats. They split the wood of the elm while green into long pieces, then score it with *pronged* knives, and beat it out till it can be nicely divided into strips, to suit the manufacture of baskets.

The Indians whom I have seen are not by any means handsome or 'noble in bearing.' They are quite the reverse. They have no distinguishing garb, except a blanket, alias a common cloth shawl or rug, pinned on the square round their shoulders and heads. This is worn by the women winter and summer. The men sometimes use it, but not on their heads. The village people and farmers are generous to them, and they pick up plenty of old clothes. I have been sometimes amused to see young Indian girls in a new rig of bright calico made with an attempt at fashion. The men always wear shoes or moccasins; the women are seldom so well off. A very old squaw came to my door one day with baskets to sell, made by herself. From curiosity, I asked her inside. I could gather from her that a man was reckoned well off among them according to the

quantity he had to eat. She said: 'Oh, such a one is well off; he has plenty to eat; he can eat twice a day. Not many of us can do *that*. I seldom get more than one meal a day, and am very glad to get that.' Poor old creature! She must have been very tall and gaunt in her young days; but at the time I saw her, she was bent over on her staff.

While the Indians were in this neighbourhood, they must have made over a thousand baskets. I used to see large loads of them as they passed to the railway station. The government have provided lands for the Indians, called 'Indian Reserves.' There they are helped in various ways, and are encouraged to be industrious, also to send their children to the schools, where they are taught in their native language, as among themselves they speak no other. But many of them prefer a nomadic life; hence their occasional visits here. In my judgment, their life is a hard one, that is, as regards those of them who have no settled homes. They are half their time hungry, and must suffer greatly from cold, with such wretched tents and scant bed-covering.

A pleasing halo of romance hangs over Canada in the eyes of those at a distance. The grand primeval forests, the rarely-clouded skies, the deer, the wolves and bears, lend a glow of enchantment to the mind's vision. Then the idea of so much to be got for so little; the free life too, away from old-world cares and ceremonies; even the smallest shanty, in the midst of all this, with a peculiar radiance of its own. I remember having such romantic ideas about it myself; but like many another distant land of verdure, when I actually came to it, its beauty vanished. I stepped behind the magic veil, and found a land of stern realities, where people have to toil when the thermometer is at eighty degrees in the shade, and where they must do the same when it is far below zero.

Look at it as one may, there is no romance for those who must earn their bread by the sweat of their brow. It is all very well for those who come to the beautiful Muskoka lakes, or such-like, in summer to camp out and fish, with 'lots of cash' to spend, and who have charming homes in England, or elsewhere, to which they may return when they grow tired. To them, indeed, the halo never dims. But with those who are attracted by the glowing descriptions given by such happy people, or, as is sometimes the case, by parties who have lands to dispose of, it is a different matter. They often break up moderately comfortable homes in the United Kingdom to come to a strange land, where at first all is so different. Many such remain but a year, or a few months. Nay, I have known them to stay but a few days, when they went back homeless, though perhaps not friendless. I confess I would have done the same myself, if I could have done it with prudence. Therefore, let all *who are doing fairly well* in dear Old England, think twice before leaving it.

A merciful Providence has opened up this great country for such as there is no room for at home. There is room and to spare for them all here, and a welcome also; but let people beware of throwing up a means of livelihood and a quiet fireside at home, for a shanty out here.

My home in the old country was in one of its most beautiful localities. I think I see it now,

with the sunlight glinting on the purple heather of the mountains and upon the open sea beneath! In all my wanderings, I have never yet seen its equal in any way. No Canadian scenery, however vaunted, could compare with what I left behind. Yet Canada has been, so to speak, a good step-mother to me, if even I had some hard times with her in early days. And I say to all who are crowded out in the United Kingdom: 'Come out, and get under the wing of this same good step-mother. She may be rough and strange to you at first; but she will not *starve* you, unless it be your own fault. She will insist, however, on your being industrious and temperate. Late and early you must work, if you would win her favour; and if she find you obedient and good, she will provide for you out of her great abundance, and you shall have ease in your old age.'

FISHERMEN'S GRIEVANCES.

CHRONIC grumblers, who would complain of nothing so much as the removal of a pet grievance, are everywhere to be found; and there are classes of men, such as the British farmer, who are, rightly or wrongly, accredited by tradition with a fancy for always keeping a grievance in stock. This is a charge that cannot, however, as a rule be brought against the salt-water fishermen, poor fellows, who, though not exempt from faults, and some of these not insignificant, are at the same time not given to fault-finding without some very special reason. The fishermen of the east coast of England have laid before government an array of grievances so formidable, that an International Conference has been called to consider them. At one period, it may be remembered, our friends entertained an unreasonable jealousy of the Scotch fishermen, who, as they had a perfect right to do, came into their waters, and, by their sensible method of fishing, and more careful style of living, seemed to do better than their English brethren. This was an unworthy feeling, of which the better class of fishermen were ashamed. Vastly different is the intolerable condition of things against which they have protested and appealed. The present is a real, not a fancy grievance.

The bountiful seas that inwrap the British Islands with their white-fringed garments have never withheld their finny harvest in due season; now, as ever, they supply lavish and wholesome food to the peoples of many lands. But the tens of thousands of hardy men who gain a livelihood by gathering in the harvest, minister to our needs through hardships and danger. For nine months in the year, in all weathers, their little craft toss and drift, or work with the trawl at heel, far from home. While landsfolk slumber in ease and safety, they keep patient watch, now rewarded by splendid success, now toiling almost in vain. In the cold blasts of the Northern seas, the hardy fisherman remains for weeks together, fortunate if, by-and-by, the smack or dandy does not return to shore with one or more of its crew missing. The natural difficulties of the occupation are surely enough and to spare. There can be no need for added strife and passion; and to remove these grievances, and, if needs be, to protect these men against themselves, is a work which well

befits the deliberations, as it indeed demands the prompt action of a conference amongst the representatives of such countries as England, France, Belgium, and Holland. Let us glance at the grievances which thus call aloud for remedy.

The herring and mackerel fishermen are first in their list of complaints. As many of our readers are aware, the small vessels engaged in this occupation use the drift-net, which may be roughly described as a continuous wall of net, averaging more than a mile and a half in length, and six feet in depth. The wall consists of a series of nets carefully fastened by long seizings to a warp at the lower edge, sunk below the surface, and kept in position afloat by bladders and corks. On the fishing-ground, sometimes thirty or forty miles from shore, the sails are reduced to a small mizzen, the mainmast is lowered upon a crutch, and the craft rides head to wind. The wall of net is paid out, until the boat remains fastened to it by the strong warp, as to a buoy. By this time, evening should be drawing near. During the night, vessel and nets drift whithersoever the tide listeth; and at daybreak, the shout of 'Haul-ho!' summons up the slumbering crew to drag in the net, and shake out the silvery shoals that have been caught in the meshes. This is the operation with herrings, and it is the main business of the fleet.

The allegation is, that foreign trawlers deliberately run across the nets, with the express purpose of destroying them; and the evidence given before a Royal Commission during the autumn and winter of 1880, reveals even a worse state of things than was at first supposed to exist. It is a serious charge to bring against the foreign fishermen; but the proof is unfortunately too clear. They have not even the plea of ignorance to advance. In the nature of things, it cannot be avoided that, in dark and stormy weather, the nets should occasionally be destroyed by accident. The writer of these lines once indulged in an expedition on board a Yarmouth herring-boat; and during one night, three brigs, a French smack, and a barque passed through the line of nets. But the fishing-ground selected was nearer shore than usual, and the damage done was trifling. It was one of the chances of the business always reckoned upon. Yet there are certain well-established rules known to all fishermen, and they are generally observed by the English and French, though criminally disregarded by Belgian and Dutch. The fishing-craft, according to these regulations, should carry two lights on the mizzen stay, not less than three feet apart, while the nets are out; while the ordinary red and green signals indicate that the course is clear. Add to this the regulation that *trawl-boats* shall not come within three miles of boats which have shot their nets, and a simple code is apparent.

Trawling, as most of our readers are doubtless aware, is a method of catching fish by means of a heavily weighted net that drags along the bottom of the sea. To overcome the resistance of so ponderous an affair, either steam-vessels or large sailing-craft are necessary; and for these, certain regulations have very properly been made, one of which we have just cited. It may be added that great jealousy usually exists between trawlers and other fishing-craft. Notwithstanding the foregoing rules, thousands of pounds

of damage are annually inflicted upon the herring-fishers by the wilful disregard of these provisions by foreign trawlers; so that in the morning, when the prospect of a fortunate haul lends energy to every man, it is discovered that the warp, which is the backbone of the frail structure of network, has been severed, that probably one half has been completely lost, and much of the rest spoiled. The discovery is hard to bear; but still harder is the certainty that it is the result of malice aforethought. The passage of an ordinary ship across the nets would tear the meshes, but leave the warp intact. The warp is cut, however, as clean as if done by a knife; and this is known to be the work of an infamous machine called 'the devil.'

This machine is a heavy four-fluked grapnel, with the upper part of each fluke purposely sharpened. It is sunk a fathom or so over the bows of the marauder, and has no other use than the destruction of nets. It so happened that while the Royal Commission of 1880 was sitting, a boat returned from the fishing-grounds off Lowestoft with a specimen accidentally left by a Belgian trawler in her nets. The chain by which it had been suspended had broken, and 'the devil' was taken in the very act of crime. It had cut away forty-five nets, damaged twenty-five others, and cut the warp; and its flukes were not unlike the curved blades of a huge scythe. The build and rig of the trawler proclaimed her an Ostender; but the darkness and stormy sea prevented further recognition. She crept away, as she had approached, a thief in the night; and the Englishman had to come in to refit and write off a loss of twenty-five pounds. It is only fair to add with regard to this 'devil,' that twenty or thirty years ago it was known also to be in use by a few evil-minded English fishermen; but this was in the old times, when Barking was the centre of the trade.

The motives actuating the foreign fishermen are as black as the deed itself. Professional jealousy is probably one not inconsiderable motive-power. Theft is another. Meanness so contemptible would seem to be incredible, did not fact upon fact establish it. An Ostend trawler, three seasons ago, was detected seizing the nets of a Lowestoft boat, which sailed round him, and threatened to run into him unless he released the gear. Already the decks of the foreigner were piled up with stolen nets, and compelled at last to make sail, the dastardly crew tore the relinquished spoil to pieces. The lost nets are often traced to Ostend, where they are freely offered for sale, or kept, in the hope of extorting salvage from the rightful owners; but as the cost and vexation of establishing a claim in a foreign country would more than outweigh the value of the recovery, the thieves escape with impunity. The English fisherman thus loses his nets with the fish entangled in them, besides losing the time spent in repairing the remnants.

The Ostend fishermen, not content with habitual destruction of other men's goods, add insult to injury. How far the Englishmen take the law into their own hands, does not appear; and perhaps the story told by the other side would reveal something in the nature of reprisals. The indignities offered are often sufficient to justify the armed resistance which some of the English

fishermen hint at, if something is not speedily done to put an end to the nefarious practices which have been accumulating for years, and which were never worse than during the season of 1880. In the previous year, the master of a Suffolk smack observed an Ostend boat—identified afterwards as *Les Trois Amis*—trawling towards the nets; and at once manned a boat to warn the intruder off. When within forty feet of the trawler, the Englishmen were fired upon, and in apprehension of a second shot, were compelled to lie down in the bottom of the boat. *Les Trois Amis*, at her leisure, then sailed through the nets; came about, and tore through them again, cutting adrift eighty nets the first, and eighteen the second time. It is a common occurrence for the foreigners to salute a boat's crew, arriving from a smack to claim explanation and compensation, with the stones brought up by the trawler, with lumps of coal, and invariably with certain forms of derision and contumely, which are particularly hard for a Britisher to bear. Sometimes the foreigner appears to drive through the nets with the express object of laughing at the anger of the English crews. In December, a French crew pelted *The Star of the East* with coal and dog fish. Dutch fishermen have been known to hack an Englishman's nets to pieces with knives, in a spirit of sheer mischief.

These buccaneers of the North Sea display much cunning in escaping detection. They hide the name and number of the vessel, and for the time remove any other distinguishing feature; and as they, contrary to all maritime custom, habitually sail without lights, they are able to get away scot-free. Emboldened by the absence of any police of the sea, they flaunt the hated 'devil' in the eyes of any crew they may casually pass on the sea; and in a thousand ways defy and annoy them.

There yet remains a grievance, as to which the Englishmen are themselves partly to blame—namely, the Dutch *cooper*, bumboat or floating grogshop, by which the men are demoralised and crime encouraged. It is a villainous traffic; and to their shame be it said, two or three Englishmen, scurvily sailing under foreign flags, are known to be engaged in it. The business is probably remunerative; but what shall it profit a man if he assist in producing 'gross breaches of trust, assaults, violence, robbery, obscenity, smuggling, and in not a few cases violent deaths?' That is the catalogue of results attributed by the Royal Commission to the presence of bumboats amongst the North Sea fishermen.

The Dutchman is the chief offender under this head. He is licensed by his government to sail the seas in a craft resembling the ordinary trawler, and to sell dutiable goods of various kinds, including, of course, spirits and tobacco. Under wholesome regulations, this accommodation might be welcome; but the abuse of the system is so terrible, that the majority of English fishermen clamour for its abolition as a public nuisance. So keenly do they feel upon the subject, that they prevailed upon the Royal Commissioner to take evidence upon it, albeit it was outside his instructions. And the list of horrors was truly appalling. The fishermen recognise the *cooper* by a basket hung from the stay, as a sign. They go on board,

intending perhaps only to replenish their exhausted stock of tobacco; then they are tempted to drink; and the mischief is done, for the stuff is a treacherous and poisonous compound of white spirits and vitriol, which speedily produces a maddening effect.

Time would fail to tell of the actual deaths that have been directly traced to this stuff. Thomas Long bartered his fish for it, drank largely, returned to his boat, and died in three hours. A man named Sergeant offered his clothes, drank the proceeds, became mad, and jumped overboard. Another named Sinclair did the same, was twice rescued, but was drowned at the third attempt. There is a fishing-village in Holland where it is possible to fit out herring-boat or trawler complete with British nets, ropes, warps, trawls, sails, anchors, and cables, that have been obtained from English fishing-boats in exchange for drink. A Dutch bumboat-man boasted that in eight weeks, in the North Sea, he made nine hundred pounds out of the English, French, Dutch, and Belgian fishermen. About two years since, one of these Dutch bumboats was stranded on the Norfolk coast; and her stores—confiscated by the Customs—were found to be two hundred and forty-four pounds of tobacco and cigars; fifty-six gallons of so-called gin, twenty-five per cent. underproof; and half a gallon of perfumed spirits.

The troubles into which the drink demon drives the fishermen may be imagined when the temptation is known to be ever present. The owners' gear is exchanged for drink. The peaceful fishing-smack becomes a pandemonium. Bushel by bushel, the fish caught are unlawfully disposed of, and the men rendered incapable of catching more. The foreign trader first gets all the money he can; but as the fishermen are not in the habit of taking much to sea with them, there is a scarcity of ready coin. Then the masters' fish go, next the nets and gear. Let one instance be given, as a concluding illustration of the evils of the system. The smack *Clara*—not more than two years ago—joined a fishing-fleet in the German Ocean, and for a while gratifying cargoes from her regularly reached the owner by the steam-carrier. But the *Clara* fell in with a *cooper*, and thenceforth the honest fishing was over. Her crew drank and quarrelled for the space of two months. Such fish as they intermittently caught, they exchanged for poison. By-and-by, the 'provisions being exhausted, the *Clara* was taken to Heligoland, and her stores sold, to fill the empty lockers. Returning to the fleet, the captain and crew resumed their old practices, until, at the end of thirteen weeks—five weeks overdue—she returned to port in a disgraceful condition. The master and mate were imprisoned. But next year the *Clara* again fell into crooked courses under a fresh master and crew. The *cooper* who now did the mischief was owned by a Hull man, hailing from Bremerhafen; and he contrived to clean the *Clara* out in a fortnight, which ended in a two days' free-fight, and a repetition of the above described dishonesty with the stores at Heligoland. The owners on this one voyage lost seven weeks' fishing; equivalent to an estimated profit of one hundred pounds.

The remedies for these grievances suggest themselves. There must be an international convention to begin with. There was a convention of many years' standing between France and England,

applying to the English Channel, and to the fisheries surrounding the British Isles outside the three-mile zone; but it was not ratified, though there is still an international law operative in the Channel only. The Report of the Royal Commission laid before Parliament during the session of 1881, declares that an international law between England, France, Belgium, and Holland is *urgently* required, and that, until it is devised, the outrages in the North Sea will continue, and cannot be stopped. The fishermen are unanimous in requesting that four swift-sailing cruisers, empowered to enforce the law, one from each nationality, shall be stationed on the fishing-grounds; that the *coopers* shall be swept off the face of the sea; and that the fishing-boats of each nation shall be compelled to carry lights, and be marked with big letters and figures on the bows and mainsails. Before the fishing season of 1882 begins, may these provisions, or others in a similar direction, be put in force, in the true interests of a class who may rest assured in the adapted sentiment of the old proverb, that though they be out of sight, they are not out of mind.

EPISTOLARY CURIOSITIES.

VERY curious specimens of the epistolary art are daily consigned to the editorial basket; now and again one escapes into print. An unflattering notice of a musical performance in a London paper elicited a long letter from the offended violinist, in which he asserted that the critic was not present at the entertainment, and announced his desire to have it generally known 'that I look upon all critics who praise me, as men of intelligence, and worthy of the greatest respect; and I look upon those rare ones who dispraise me as having a screw loose in their cerebral development. In conclusion, I consider that if the person who wrote the notice was present at the performance, he is only worthy to be an inmate of a home for idiots; and if he was not present, he is a mean unmanly cur, and should get seven years' hard labour. However, I have not the least doubt but that I will be gaining the applause of admiring thousands when the poor fellow is getting worm-eaten in an unknown and contemptible grave.—Yours obliged, P^AGANINI REDIVIVUS.'

A thief thus wrote to the editor of the *New York Tribune*: 'SIR—Please advise your readers always to leave their names and addresses in their pocket-books. It frequently happens in our business that we come into possession of portemonnaies containing private papers and photographs, which we would gladly return; but we have no means of doing so. It is dangerous to carry them about, so we are forced to destroy them. I remember an instance when I met with serious trouble because I could not make up my mind to destroy a picture of a baby, which I had found in the pocket-book of a gentleman, which came into my hands in the way of business in the Third Avenue Road. I had lost a baby myself the year before, of the same age as this

one, and would have given all I had for such a picture. There was no name in the pocket-book, and no way of finding out who was the owner; so, like a fool, I advertised it, and got shadowed by the police. Tell your readers to give us a fair show to be decent, and always leave their addresses in their pocket-books. We want to live and let live.—Yours truly,

A PICKPOCKET.'

There was some reason in the light-fingered one's request, which is more than can be said for that of the autograph-hunter begging a well-known journalist's autograph for his album, with: 'If you deem the request unwarranted on my part, pray pardon me; but at the same time, send the refusal in your own handwriting, and with your own signature, that I may know the refusal is authentic.' His impudence deserved as scant courtesy as that yielded by Dickens to an Oxford undergraduate, whose communication running: 'SIR—Understanding that you insert Rhymes in your serial, I send you some,' was answered: 'SIR—We do not insert Rhymes without Reason.'

The world has been reproached with knowing nothing of its greatest benefactors. The charge is too widely drawn; but we must in part admit it, feeling assured that not one of our readers could tell the name of the inventive genius who wrote to a London editor:

'SIR—The subject is a motive-power, regulated by a law of nature, capable of putting into motion the most cumbrous machinery, unintermitting in its action day and night, and free from any cost from one year's end to another, its power unlimited. It is estimated to save the government two hundred thousand pounds per annum in fuel alone, and to reduce the price of coals a hundred per cent., cheapening all manufacturing produce also.'

Getting our coals for nothing would be a consummation devoutly to be wished, indeed; but we fear our inventive genius credits himself with an impossible achievement; like the actress who signed herself, 'Respectfully yours, Miss St George Hussey, *née* Mrs Hussey.'

Ladies looking for sons-in-law, rarely make their approaches so openly as the Canadian dame who wrote to a newly settled eligible: 'DEAR MR B——, I, Mrs Wigton, wish you would call on my daughter Amelia; she is very amusing, and is a regular young flirt. She can sing like a humming-bird; and her papa can play on the fiddle nicely; and we might have a rare old ho-down; and then we will have an oyster supper. Amelia is highly educated; she can dance like a grasshopper looking for grubs, and she can make beautiful bread; it just tastes like hunny bees' bread; and for pumpkin pies she can't be beat. In fact, she is head of all the F—— girls, and will make a good wife for any man.—Yours truly, MRS WIGTON.—Bring your brother.'

In cases where it is quite unnecessary that mothers should trouble themselves in urging things forward, the expression of devotion and undying love is not unfrequently half-comic in its

exaggeration. Here is the outburst of a Californian lover. 'If,' wrote the latter to the object of his affections—'If one atom of the deep, deep love I feel for you is scattered throughout the world, I could stake my life it will fill, if allowed to do so, the entire human race, and thence will derive the word commonly used as love. Good-bye, my dearest dear. Yours till death, and beyond it and eternity.' By-and-by he was sued for breach of promise; and asked what he meant by such language, replied: 'Oh, I couldn't reasonably be expected to explain such stuff.' No explanation was needed in the case of the faithless swain, who abruptly ended a ten years' courtship with: 'DEAR MISS—I write these few lines to say that I don't think you and me should agree if we was to come together. I am generally inclined, and you are the other way, so I beg to be excused.' She would not excuse him; and he had to pay for his default; a fate that befell another fickle gentleman, who took his leave after a tiff, complaining that the lady had put him down so that he could not come up again, and pathetically concluding:

So from you I must part;
I make the sacrifice from my heart.
So farewell, Miss Bell;
Alone I'll dwell.

An Englishman of note wrote to a Mohammedan official for some statistics of the city in which he lived, and was thus politely rebuked for his inquisitiveness: 'MY ILLUSTRIOUS FRIEND AND JOY OF MY LIVER—The thing you ask of me is both difficult and useless. Although I have passed all my days in this place, I have neither counted the houses, nor have I inquired into the number of inhabitants; and as to what one person loads on his mules, and the other stows away in the bottom of his ship, this is no business of mine. But above all, as to the previous history of this city, heaven only knows the amount of dirt and confusion that the Infidels may have eaten before the coming of the sword of Islam. It were unprofitable for us to inquire into it. O my soul! O my lamb! seek not after things which concern thee not. Thou comest unto us, and we welcome thee; go in peace!'

A very different style was adopted by the manager of one of the great Indian railways in addressing a European subordinate given to indulge in needlessly strong language. 'DEAR SIR,' wrote he, 'it is with extreme regret that I have to bring to your notice that I observed very unprofessional conduct on your part this morning when making a trial trip. I allude to the abusive language you used to the drivers and others. This I consider an unwarrantable assumption of my duties and functions, and I may say rights and privileges. Should you wish to abuse any of our employés, I think it will be best in future to do so in regular form, and I beg to point out what I consider this to be. You will please submit to me in writing the form of oath you wish to use; when, if it meets my approval, I shall at once sanction it; but if not, I shall refer the same to the Directors; and in the course of a few weeks, their decision will be known. Perhaps, to save time, it might be as well for you to submit a list of expletives generally in use by you, and I can then at once refer those to which I object to the Directors for their decision. But,

pending that, you will please to understand that all cursing and swearing at drivers and others engaged on the traffic arrangements in which you may wish to indulge must be done in writing, and through me. By adopting this course you will perceive how much responsibility you will save yourself, and how very much the business of the Company will be expedited, and its interests promoted.'

Prominent members of the theatrical profession are too accustomed to receive extraordinary epistles from utter strangers, to take much note of them; but we doubt if any actor ever had a funnier offer made to him than was once made to the elder Booth. Here it is: 'WEST HOUSE SCHOOL, PROSPECT, N.Y., December the eighth, 1818.—Mr EDWARD BOOTH.—DEAR SUR AND FRIEND: Heering that you was going to come to Utica to perform in a play called *Hamlet*, I would like to say that us boys is gitting up a Exhibition for the benefit of the diseased soldiers and their widows and orphans, and would like to engage you too take the leading part. I have talked it up with the boys, and we will do the squire thing with you, and I am arterised to make you the following offer. We will come down after you with a good conveyance, and will give you at the rate of Ten Dollars per day and board, and shall want you about one weak. If you think it nessary, you can have one or to of our best wimmen actors come up with you; but we can't pay them over three dollars a day and feed. You know how that is yourself, this kind of bisuness is awful uncertain. You can have some fun out of it a hunting dear and foxes around Flamsburgs and Ed. Wilksuns. Please let me know as soon as you can. Yours truly, JAMES SWEET. *P. Scrip.*—If you come callating to hunt, get Frank Meyer's hound. She is a good one.'

Our last example of epistolary curiosities came to its astonished recipient in a barrel of American apples bought in the Birmingham market, and ran thus: 'To the Reader—Just for fun I thought I would write this note to tell you these apples were raised in Chester, New Hampshire, U.S.A. They were taken from our place two miles to the depot, and sold for one dollar per barrel. I can only wonder who may read this; whether it be in America or Europe this may go to, some palace, or perhaps some place far inferior. They may be destroyed by fire or water, or perhaps stolen. However, seeing I have wondered so much, I would like to have you write me. I am a young school-teacher, age about twenty. I live in the country. I have graduated from the High School. I should like a good position as teacher, writer for magazine, or a chance to attend some school, so as I could pay my way.—Wishing you happiness, I am, HARRY M. WARREN.'

The surprised recipient of the simple letter learned one thing from it that interested him—namely, that the barrel of apples for which he paid fifteen shillings, cost the importers, freightage and all, just seven shillings and twopence; so that there must be more unprofitable things to trade in than apples.

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